



Media Release

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Santos and Barossa joint venture partners announce Barossa Aboriginal Future Fund

Santos and its joint venture partners in the Barossa Gas Project today announced they will invest up to A\$10 million in Northern Territory coastal Aboriginal communities and homelands as the development phase of the project progresses.

Investments will be aimed at improving community and homeland infrastructure and services as well as programs that enable Aboriginal people to maintain cultural practices and carry out cultural obligations, care for their country and establish pathways to skilled, well-paying, secure jobs and business opportunities.

In addition, the Barossa Gas Project joint venture partners announced they are supportive of establishing a fund from commencement of production (targeted for 2025), for the life of the project, to share the benefits of the project with Northern Territory coastal Aboriginal communities and homelands. The fund would aim to deliver intergenerational progress for Aboriginal Territorians and build a better future for the next generation.

The fund would invest over the long term in community and homeland infrastructure, cultural activities and services that improve health, education, housing, community resilience and economic outcomes for Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory. It would also invest in programs that enable Aboriginal people to maintain cultural practices and carry out cultural obligations, care for their country and build capacity to establish new pathways to skilled, well-paying, secure jobs and business opportunities for Aboriginal Territorians.

Santos, as operator of the Barossa joint venture, has been engaging with Aboriginal leaders from the Tiwi Islands, East Arnhem, West Arnhem, Darwin-Daly-Wagait and Victoria River District regions during 2023. It is intended that Aboriginal people will have a real voice in establishing governance arrangements and the investment mandate for the fund, and in selecting priority projects for funding.

Santos Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director Kevin Gallagher said the Barossa joint venture partners are committed to real and practical action to help close the gap on Aboriginal disadvantage in the Northern Territory.

Mr Gallagher said, "Training, education and good jobs are a universal foundation for human progress. They are the building blocks for individual social and economic empowerment, and just as importantly, for stronger, more resilient families and communities. Achieving better employment outcomes for

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Aboriginal Territorians¹ depends on investments such as Barossa gas and Darwin LNG (DLNG) life extension to provide new job, business and other opportunities.

“The Barossa gas and DLNG life extension projects are already training and employing Aboriginal Territorians, and we plan to do much more, including through Santos and DLNG’s recent announcement of a new jobs program with KAEFER, our valued partner providing scaffolding, mechanical and fabric maintenance services for the DLNG plant.

“This program has already been a resounding success with over 90 applicants to date. Fifteen Aboriginal trainees and apprentices will start with KAEFER at the end of February with a second group to commence in the May/June period later this year.

“Sharing the benefits of projects like Barossa is a meaningful step we can take towards closing the gap,” Mr Gallagher said.

The details are intended to be finalised in consultation with Aboriginal leaders and other stakeholders prior to the commencement of production. Benefits can only be shared as the Barossa development progresses, which is subject to regulatory approvals.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Mining, Mark Monaghan:

“The Territory Labor Government fully supports the Barossa Gas project, and deeply understands investment into remote areas underpins greater outcomes for the wider community.

“Santos is bridging the gap between private companies and traditional owners by creating positive, long lasting change through a new community benefit fund which will open more doors to access better health care, education and infrastructure.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for Environment, Kate Worden:

“This funding commitment from Santos shows the role the resource industry has in creating stronger communities and providing a career path for indigenous Territorians.

“This is an example of how the resources sector can work with remote communities to improve outcomes for those communities and make a lasting impact through training and infrastructure.”

¹ In 2021 only 31 per cent of Aboriginal people aged 15 to 64 years of age were employed in the NT, unemployment stood at 8 per cent and 61 per cent were not in the labour force at all. Employment outcomes have declined over the last 15 years or more. (<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-welfare/indigenous-employment>)